

# CHTS Newsletter 2021



Dear Member,

Having written about carp for the past twenty years it is difficult to know where to start when faced with the task of putting together a Newsletter about Croxley Hall Trout Syndicate to cover the past year especially when I am following a man who always had a tale about horses and the odds the bookies gave him or about his beloved football team who play in blue in the south of London. For those of you who have not yet worked it out the man in question is John Price, who composed and wrote all previous CHTS Newsletters. John has now moved to Yorkshire and to be more precise the Brontë country with his family. We all wish him well and thank him and the rest of the CHTS Committee including Martin Eastment, Brian Maguire, Rod Cutler and Mike Humphreys for their dedication, hard work and endless hours of meetings to ensure CHTS members enjoyed 20 years of fantastic fishing at Croxley Hall. When the syndicate was formed twenty years ago, I could never have imagined that the same Committee would be there right at the end nor could I have predicted they would be giving everyone a refund because they had managed the syndicates finances so well.

On the subject of finances, I understand from Brian Maguire (Hon CHTS Treasurer) that refunds should have appeared in CHTS Member's bank accounts very recently, sincere thanks again to Brian for all his hard work, please check your bank statement to ensure it has arrived.

Sadly the 2020/21 Season wasn't the best one to remember it started with an unprecedented lockdown for the UK population and it finished the same way with a further lockdown which we all thought back in March last year was a one-off lifetime event. It just goes to show you never know what is around the corner and the next time you are on the banks with the sun shining and the birds are singing, and you are not getting a bite, just say to yourself does it really matter I am alive, and I survived the pandemic. I will be saying to you of course there is plenty of fish in there you must be using the wrong fly. Hopefully when you are next on the banks of Croxley Hall lakes you will have had your vaccine jab and we will all be looking forward and not back at a horrendous year just gone.

Talking of banks and not the financial institutions, next season many of you will be venturing down to the banks of the River Chess in Sarratt which is less than five miles from Croxley Hall to enjoy the wonders of river fishing on a private beat of the river Chess owned by Jon Tyler, a former watercress grower related to my wife's family. Rod Cutler has set up a booking system on the new CHTS website to enable only two people maximum to book to fish the river in the morning or afternoon/evening session. If you consider on average only one member fished Croxley Hall per day throughout previous seasons, I very much doubt this fabulous beat of river will be booked out every day.



However, please do not just turn up to fish the river, make sure you book it through the website even if you do it on the same day because you have noticed nobody else has booked. The owner of the beat on the River Chess, Jon Tyler, also has access to the website booking system hence it will help him to know who is fishing and who should not be fishing so please make sure you book to fish the Chess. Hopefully before the river season commences on 1st April, Government restrictions will allow us to meet at the Chess venue and have a good look around and enjoy the wonderful scenery before anyone wets a line. A location map will be published on the website soon.

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**CROXLEY HALL**  
Trout Syndicate



Latest Fishery News



Please note the current  
Season ends on 31st  
January 2021. The new  
Season commences on  
15th March 2021

Many of you will have noticed we have a new website which is now online at <https://croxleyhall.co.uk/CHTS/index.html> If you have not done so already please login using your membership number and use the initials of your first name and surname (in lowercase) as your password. Once you have logged in the menu will change and if you click on "Members" you will see a host of new pages including "Membership Renewals" and "Payments", plus other informative pages including of course "Members Fishing." This page displays in real time who is on the water at Croxley Hall, you cannot see who is fishing the river Chess on this page but of course as I have mentioned earlier you can see who is booked on the River Chess by visiting the "River Chess" page and scroll to the bottom of the page.

Last year we took advantage of some spectacular fish produced by Bibury Trout Farm and one other supplier.

Because of the lockdown early in the year trout farms around the country were in the strange position of not being able to deliver fish they had pre-sold. Trout still had to be fed on the farms of course and naturally they grew



bigger day by the day. When fishing recommenced in Mid May 2020 most trout farms were bursting at the seams and their trout were much bigger than they should have been. Consequently, we took delivery of larger trout than usual and CHTS members caught some spectacular fish with a high average weight plus many trophy fish weighing up to and over 10lbs. Please note 2020 was an exceptional year and should not be taken as the norm. We will of course continue stocking trout of exceptional quality and of a good average weight but typically a 10lbs fish costs £30 each to buy, so it does not take a genius to work out it would not be sustainable to stock large numbers of trout of that size all the time. Rest assured though there will always be big trout in the lakes.

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A few members have asked me again if we could return to catch and release fishing, my answer has always been it does not work on still waters as we proved during the first fifteen years of CHTS. However, it does work on fast flowing rivers where smaller fish are stocked and if you have opted to fish the river Chess this coming season you are welcome to put it to the test. All trout caught from the Chess must be returned alive, if you can release them safely without lifting them out of the water, so much the better. It still saddens me to see trout discarded by some members especially as the price of an average size fish is around £15 each and having been a fish farmer for nearly 20 years, I also know how much time, dedication and heartbreak goes into producing a fish over its

lifetime only to end up discarded in a smelly bin. Hopefully, I have a solution for the coming season. I am going to put a chest freezer outside the lodge in a waterproof enclosure, where the landing nets were housed. Please can I ask any member who does not want their fish to place them in a black bin liner (which we will supply) in the freezer when they leave the fishery. More importantly unwanted fish should be kept on a stringer in the lake in cool water after being despatched. Do not let them dry out in the sun first then place them in the freezer. I am not sure yet quite how I am going to do this, but the unwanted fish will be smoked and offered back to members to buy at cost price. Some of you already take your trout to Hodges fish mongers to be smoked and you are welcome to continue doing the same, they are your trout after all, I only want discarded fish provided they are in good condition and not pre-cooked in the sun.

Another question I have been asked is where the new lake location is. The new lake is situated the end of Lodge lake beyond the conifer trees and the sluice where there is more land next to the outlet stream. It will be connected by large underground pipes to Willow Lake to ensure it benefits from the artesian water supply that flows through Willow Lake and Lodge Lake. The new lake will be completed and landscaped during 2021 and hopefully will be open for fishing for the 2022 season. As you can see from the picture construction is already well underway. The water is only coloured because the picture was taken immediately after further excavation.



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Finally, a huge thank you to all CHTS members who contributed to the CHTS Committee gift fund. In total 32 members contributed a total of £1375. With the additional contribution from the fishery, we managed to purchase:

- 5 x Simba reels specially engraved
  - 5 x Cortland floating lines
  - 5 x backing lines.
  - Engraved crystal wine glasses
  - 5 x presentation gift boxes
- With postage and packing the grand total came to £1897.



All gifts have now been delivered to the CHTS Committee.

If you have read this far well done because I have run out of topics to report on and if you are bored why not login to the new website and pay for next year's subscription online or by cheque if you prefer. Membership subscriptions are due by 14th February 2021. If I do not hear from you by 14<sup>th</sup> Feb I will assume you do not wish to re-join and I will offer your place to a prospective new member on our growing waiting list.

Stay safe, stay at home until you get the jab and I look forward to seeing you next season.

**Paul Sansom-Timms**

**Fishery Owner**

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